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COOPERATION WITH THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Progress report

Note by the secretariat

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Mandate

1. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), in existence since 1988, is a major source of scientific and technical advice to the Convention process. Article 21.2 of the Convention requires the secretariat to cooperate closely with the IPCC to ensure that the Panel can respond to the need for objective scientific and technical advice.

2. At its first session, the Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 6/CP.1,[1] invited the officers of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) to submit, after due consultation with their respective bodies, proposals for future cooperation between the SBSTA and the SBI and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to the second session of the Conference of the Parties. The SBSTA, at its first session, developed a list of items on which the IPCC could provide assistance (FCCC/SBSTA/1995/3). The list was considered preliminary and subject to changes, modifications, refinements and additions. The SBSTA requested the Bureau to hold joint meetings with the officers of the IPCC and report to each of its sessions on the outcome of these meetings.

3. The SBSTA, at its second session, noted with appreciation the decisions taken by the IPCC at its eleventh session in Rome (December 1995) on its future work programme and, particularly, that it intended to prepare a Third Assessment Report by around 2000 and to continue work on methodologies for greenhouse gas inventories. The SBSTA also considered the conclusions of the meetings of the Joint Working Group (JWG) of officers of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the IPCC (FCCC/SBSTA/1996/6). It requested the IPCC to undertake activities in support of the SBSTA and to advise the SBSTA accordingly (FCCC/SBSTA/1996/8). Furthermore, the SBSTA requested the secretariat to take the above-mentioned list as the basis for the financial contribution to the IPCC in 1996, as provided in the Convention budget. Finally, the SBSTA requested its Chairman to continue the series of meetings of the Joint Working Group. The list of items on which the IPCC could provide input to the SBSTA is provided in the annex below. The list includes a column describing the current status of each item.

4. At its third session, the SBSTA took note of the information on the work undertaken by the IPCC in response to requests from the SBSTA and the Ad Hoc Group on the Berlin Mandate (AGBM); it expressed its satisfaction with the cooperation between the SBSTA and the IPCC, *inter alia*, through their respective Bureaux and secretariats; it welcomed the plans of the IPCC to prepare technical papers, workshops and special reports, as indicated in document FCCC/SBSTA/1996/10; and invited the secretariat to keep it informed on the progress and outcome of the IPCC work (FCCC/SBSTA/1996/13).

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[1] For decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its first session, see document FCCC/CP/1995/7/Add.1.

5. At its second session, the COP focused on the Second Assessment Report. By its decision 6/CP.2,[2] it noted the need to consider the report as a whole; considered it to be the most comprehensive and authoritative assessment now available of the scientific and technical information regarding global climate change; expressed its appreciation to the IPCC, particularly its Chairman, and all its authors and scientists for their excellent work; welcomed the commitment of the IPCC to undertake the work programme requested in support of the SBSTA and the Ad Hoc Group on the Berlin Mandate; and urged continuing cooperation between the Convention bodies and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (FCCC/CP/1996/15/Add.1).

6. The IPCC held its twelfth session from 11 to 13 September 1996 in Mexico City. The Joint Working Group of the officers of the UNFCCC and the IPCC held a meeting on 8 September 1996 in Geneva (see section II below).

B. Scope of the note

7. This note provides background information on the status of IPCC activities (section II) and lists issues arising from the IPCC plenary and the JWG meeting (section III) that require consideration by the SBSTA, in particular (a) the revised work programme for technical papers and special reports being prepared by the IPCC for the SBSTA; (b) the need for consultations on assumptions for emission profiles beyond the year 2010; and (c) future activities on emissions associated with harvested wood products.

8. The IPCC *Revised 1996 Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* are considered in the addendum to this note (FCCC/SBSTA/1996/18/Add.1). The possible role of the IPCC, and other international organizations, in support of a longer-term programme of work on methodological issues related to the Convention is addressed in document FCCC/SBSTA/1996/16.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

9. The SBSTA may wish to take note of sections II and III below, bearing in mind any conclusions it might reach regarding the issues considered in documents FCCC/SBSTA/1996/18/Add.1 and FCCC/SBSTA/1996/16 and, on that basis, take decisions pertaining to cooperation with the IPCC.

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[2] For decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its second session, see document FCCC/CP/1996/15/Add.1.

II. BACKGROUND

Twelfth session of the IPCC held in Mexico City

10. At its twelfth session, the IPCC approved its programme of work for 1997 and accepted the *Revised 1996 Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories*. The revised guidelines are summarized in the addendum to the present note. The IPCC deferred a decision on a greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory module related to harvested wood products. It requested that the SBSTA be consulted on the matter because of the broader policy implications. This module will be published as a technical discussion paper and a meeting of experts will be held in 1997.

11. The IPCC also considered the list of issues identified by the SBSTA at its third session. It developed a revised work programme for technical papers and special reports (see annex below).[3] According to the revised schedule, a technical paper on "Technologies, policies and measures for mitigating climate change" will be available for the fourth session of the SBSTA and the fifth session of the AGBM, and two further technical papers will be completed in February 1997. Other technical papers have been delayed and several will be issued as special reports to comply with IPCC requirements for review of such papers (see below).

12. The IPCC agreed to initiate two special reports in 1997 that are not listed in the annex. One report on aviation and the global atmosphere will be prepared in collaboration with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the Ozone Assessment Panel of the Montreal Protocol, and another will be prepared on GHG emission scenarios. The IPCC further agreed to hold four workshops in 1997 on the following topics:

- Integrated assessment modelling - March 1997
- Economic impacts of any proposed new commitments by Annex I Parties on all Parties - third quarter of 1997
- Regional climate change projections for impact assessment - third quarter of 1997
- Adaptation - 1997 (to be determined)

[3] The annex to this note is reproduced as it appeared in document FCCC/SBSTA/1996/8, except that a fifth column marked "Current status" has been added to indicate the decisions agreed upon by the IPCC at its twelfth session (11-13 September 1996, Mexico City).

13. The IPCC approved a budget of approximately 1 million SwF for further work on greenhouse gas inventories in 1997. The work programme will support expert meetings on four topics:

- Comparison of top-down and bottom-up estimates of global emissions
- Harvested wood products
- Land-use change and forestry
- Updated emission factors and default data

The programme also provides for the publication of the Reference Manual, Workbook and Reporting Instructions of the revised inventory guidelines.

14. The IPCC plenary identified two issues on which it wishes to consult the SBSTA; in particular, the direction of its work on emissions associated with harvested wood products and guidance on the assumptions for emission profiles beyond the year 2010. Consultations on the latter issue are needed in order for the IPCC to respond to the SBSTA list of items, and especially for information on the implications of different emission limitation proposals on projected temperature increases, sealevel rise and other changes.

Meeting of the JWG, 8 November 1996

15. A meeting of the Joint Working Group of the officers of the UNFCCC and the IPCC was held on 8 November 1996 in Geneva. It was informed that the IPCC had begun consideration of the structure of the Third Assessment Report and of ways to produce the report. The schedule for the report will be decided at the thirteenth session of the IPCC in 1997. The JWG was briefed on current efforts to produce technical papers and special reports as well as on the revised schedule proposed by the IPCC. It agreed to provide the new schedule to the SBSTA, without comment, for consideration. It was also informed that a copy of the Reference Manual for the revised inventory guidelines would be available for the fourth session of the SBSTA.

16. The JWG also considered the issue of harvested wood products. It was suggested that the SBSTA is the appropriate body to determine how emissions from harvested wood products should be allocated. The JWG noted the need to assess the precedents and implications of the issue, including, for example, the practical problems that could arise in data collection and the possible relationship to international trade.

17. It was agreed that the Chairman and other officers of the IPCC would brief the SBSTA and the AGBM on its work, and that the briefings would cover the revised schedule for technical papers and special reports; the technical paper entitled, "Technologies, policies and measures for mitigating climate change"; the revised GHG inventory guidelines; and the possible assumptions related to emission profiles beyond the year 2010.

III. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

18. The SBSTA may wish to give consideration to the following issues.

IPCC work programme

19. The IPCC has agreed to a revised programme of work for its activities in support of the Convention (see annex). The reasons for the revised programme vary by topic, but include: (a) insufficient new scientific and technical information (for example, on detection of climate change), (b) significant new information warranting a full IPCC expert review (for example, country study information on regional impacts), and (c) the need for additional time to develop a sound technical response (for example, on methodological and technological aspects of technology transfer). **The SBSTA may wish to consider whether the schedule meets its needs, including whether some products will still be timely upon completion, and whether any other options to develop technical papers should be pursued**, recognizing that the IPCC is making a substantial effort to develop its technical papers and special reports quickly. In view of the long lead time to develop scientifically credible products, the SBSTA may also wish to consider **whether other issues should be added to the original list of items for consideration by the IPCC, or if it wishes to identify issues for the Third Assessment Report.**

Long-term emission profiles

20. In considering how to respond to the request of the SBSTA for information on the implications of different emission limitation proposals on projected temperature increases, sealevel rise and other changes, the IPCC decided to seek the views of the SBSTA. In particular, there is a need for dialogue between the SBSTA and the IPCC about the assumptions underlying possible future emission profiles. Two questions may be particularly relevant. **First, what assumptions should be made concerning the economic, social and other goals of Annex I Parties between 2000 and 2010 and beyond the year 2010 that are likely to affect GHG emissions from the energy and other sectors? And second, what assumptions should be made concerning the economic, social and other goals likely to be undertaken by non-Annex I Parties in the future that are likely to affect GHG emissions from the energy and other sectors?** The exploration of this topic would employ models as used in the Second Assessment Report and would explore the sensitivity of the results to the range of assumptions. If the SBSTA can reach agreement on these issues at its fourth session, the IPCC anticipates that it will be able to respond by mid-1997.

21. The IPCC will present a set of emission profiles at the fourth session of the SBSTA for consideration. **The SBSTA may wish to bear in mind the following boundries when considering how to respond to the IPCC,** for example:

(a) Case 1: No further actions are undertaken by any Parties

(b) Case 2: Annex I Parties initate further actions

(c) Case 3: Annex I and non-Annex I Parties initiate further actions

Harvested wood products

22. **The SBSTA may wish to consider whether the secretariat, in cooperation with the IPCC, should prepare a scoping study on the allocation of harvested wood products in emission inventories.** The purpose of the paper would be to identify the range of policy and operational issues related to possible inventories of GHG associated with the harvesting of wood products.

Annex

STATUS REPORT ON INITIAL LIST OF ITEMS ON WHICH THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE COULD PROVIDE INPUT TO THE SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

SBSTA issue	Description of activity	IPCC product	Remarks	Current status
Regional scenarios of climate change	Recommendations on scenario development in 1996/1997 for application in impacts assessments	Workshop and Special Report[1]	Workshop in 2nd half 1996; Special Report to be determined by IPCC-XII	Workshop held in November 1996/ Follow-up workshop planned 2nd half 1997
Regional impacts of climate change	a) Integration of sectoral impact assessments in Second Assessment Report, with focus on vulnerabilities, regional aspects, and critical zones, with consideration of issues related to Article 4.8, 4.9, 4.10	a) Technical paper[2]	a) Late 1996/early 1997	a) Draft technical paper has been converted into a Special Report by IPCC decision so as to include information from country studies - late 1997
	b) Development of vulnerability indicators	b) Special Report[1]	b) To be determined by IPCC-XII	b) Meeting of experts convened by Netherlands for IPCC
Full scientific assessments	A full assessment of the science, impacts, adaptation, mitigation, economic and social aspects of climate change	Third Assessment Report	Third Assessment Report (2000)	On schedule
Detection of climate change	Research on this topic to be monitored and assessed by IPCC	Special Report	To be determined by IPCC-XII	No significant new scientific information*
Emissions inventory methodologies	IPCC will continue preparation of information for Phase II Guidelines, in cooperation with, inter alia, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, particularly revisions for CH_4	Revised IPCC Guidelines on GHG inventories	Three workshops planned in 1st/2nd quarters 1996; Adoption at IPCC-XII	*Revised 1996 Guidelines* approved at IPCC-XII

SBSTA issue	Description of activity	IPCC product	Remarks	Current status
Methodological and technological aspects of technology transfer	Synthesis of information in Second Assessment Report, to assess experience on such issues as: (i) types of transfer, technology evaluation, and options; (ii) sectors targeted; (iii) role of participants (for example, governments, private sector, IGOs, NGOs); (iv) approaches to promoting cooperation; (v) issues related to capacity building	Technical Paper[2]	Early 1997	Technical paper converted to Special Report by IPCC decision -1998
Evaluation of technologies	Assessment of major constraints to innovative, state-of-the-art technologies, and promising approaches for overcoming them	Technical paper[2] Special Report*	Early 1997 To be determined by IPCC-XII	Scoping paper to be available at IPCC-XIII*
Modelling of stabilization scenarios towards addressing Article 2	a) Scenarios and pathways for global stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations to meet a range of possible targets for rates of temperature and sealevel change and absolute temperature and sealevel change, and economic considerations	Technical paper[2]	Early 1997	February 1997
Implications of emission limitations	a) Assess the economic impacts on all Parties, including non-Annex I Parties, of any proposed new commitments to be undertaken by Annex I Parties	a) Technical paper[2] Special Report[1]	a) Early 1997 To be determined by IPCC-XII	a) Workshop 1997 (Will also address "Impacts of Response Measures"; see below)*
	b) Assess the implications of different emissions limitation proposals including any proposed new commitments to be undertaken by Annex I Parties on projected temperature increases, sealevel rise and other changes in climate	b) Technical paper[2] Special Report[1]	b) Early 1997 To be determined by IPCC-XII	b) Mid -1997*

SBSTA issue	Description of activity	IPCC product	Remarks	Current status
Adaptation measures	Adaptation options, enhancing resilience of systems, and costs of adaptation	Workshop (1997) Special Report[1]	To be determined by IPCC-XII	Expert group meeting in early 1997/Workshop 1997*
Integrated assessment modelling	Integrated assessment modelling including land-use considerations, with a focus on meeting the needs of, and building capacity in developing countries	Workshop(s) Special Report[1]	1996/1997 To be determined by IPCC-XII	Workshop 10 -12 March 1997 Tokyo Japan*
Simple climate models	Status of simple climate models	Technical paper[2]	1996/1997	February 1997
Impacts of response measures	Identification of technical, socio-economic, and environmental aspects of Article 4.8, 4.9 and 4.10	Special Report[1]	To be determined by IPCC-XII	Workshop 1997*

Notes

[1] Initiation of all Special Reports is subject to approval by the IPCC at its twelfth session. Special Reports will follow the full IPCC review and approval procedures and require approximately 18 months for preparation and approval.

[2] Technical papers will require approximately 6 to 9 months for preparation, review and release by the Bureau of the IPCC.

* No special report in 1997 work programme